

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman Jim Costa (D-Fresno) and Congressman Raúl M. Grijalva (D-Arizona) introduced a resolution honoring the 65th anniversary of the first Bracero workers in the United States. The Bracero program was implemented in 1942 to fill the labor shortage in the United States caused by World War II. Twenty-eight states participated in the program, which lasted from 1942 to 1964.

"Braceros were a major cog in the American war machine during World War II," said Costa. "Their efforts in our farms helped to keep our country, and our military men fed, and their work on the railroads helped get desperately needed supplies across the nation in an efficient manner. It's time we give them the honor they deserve."

"As a son of a Bracero, my father always felt he worked hard for his family and this new country of ours," said Grijalva. "I am proud to honor all the workers like my father."

In 1942, a bilateral agreement between the United States and Mexico was reached to bring workers from Mexico into the United States to ease the manpower shortage caused by World War II. While the program was scheduled to end at the end of World War II, it lasted 22 years. On September 29th, 1942, the first 1,500 Braceros arrived in California from Mexico City, Mexico to work in the sugar beet fields around Stockton, California. While the work of the Braceros has been recognized by many state and local governments, they have not been recognized by the federal government.

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